ALAN MOORE

WATCHMEN ISSUE 1.

"AT MIDNIGHT, ALL THE AGENTS..." (26 PAGES)

PAGE 1.

(PANEL) 1.

ALRIGHT. I'M FYSCHED UP, I'VE GOT BLOOD UP TO MY ELBOWS, VEINS IN MY TEETH AND MY HELMET AND KNEEPADS SECURELY FASTENED. LET'S GET OUT THERE AND MAKE TROUBLE. THIS FIRST PAGE IS A SERIES OF VERTICAL JUMPS THAT TAKE US UP IN A STRAIGHT PROGRESSION FROM A MINUTE AND MICROSCOPIC DETAILED VIEW OF THE GUTTERS OF NEW YORK UP TO A PANORAMIC SHOT LOOKING DOWN UPON THE ROOFTOPS OF THIS FAMILIAR AND YET CURIOUSLY ALTERED CITYSCAPE. IN THIS FIRST PANEL WE ARE LOOKING STRAIGHT DOWN AT A DRAIN OPENING IN A PERFECTLY ORDINARY GUTTER. TO THE RIGHT OF THE PICTURE THE ACTUAL OUTER WALL OF THE CURB DROPS DOWN AWAY FROM US LIKE A MINIATURE CLIFF. OVER MORE TOWARDS THE LEFT, DOWN AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PICTURE, WE CAN SEE THE OLD AND WORN METAL OF THE DRAIN COVER WITH SOLID DARKNESS VISIBLE BETWEEN ITS SLATS. UP AT THE TOP OF THE PICTURE WE CAN JUST SEE THE DIRTY GUTTER RUNNING DOWN TOWARDS THE MOUTH OF THE DRAIN AT THE BOTTOM. THERE ARE ONLY TWO ELEMENTS THAT SEPARATE THIS IMAGE FROM A STANDARD EVERDAY CLOSE-UP OF A DRAIN, AND THE FIRST OF THESE IS THE UNUSUAL AMOUNT OF BLOOD WHICH IS GUSHING DOWN THE AFOREMENTIONED APERTURE IN THE FIRST PICTURE. LIQUID FINGERS OF BLOOD, THICK AND BRILLIANT SCARLET, DRIBBLE DOWN THE WALL OF THE CURB OVER TO THE RIGHT. GARISH STREAKS OF BRILLIANT RED AGAINST THE MUTED CONCRETE-GRAY OF THE STONE THAT THEY TRICKLE DOWN ACROSS. THE GUTTER IS SIMILARLY FULL OF BLOOD, GURGLING HAPPILY TOWARDS THE DRAIN WHERE IT SPILLS OUT OVER THE METAL DRAIN COVERING AND DRIPS DOWN AS TINY GLINTING BEADS INTO THE DARKNESS BENEATH. THE SECOND ITEM OF REMARK IS A 1" DIAMETER SMILEY BADGE, COLORED A VIVID SUNSHINE YELLOW AS IT LAYS THERE IN THE GUTTER SMILING UP AT US AGAINST A BACKGROUND OF LURID BLOOD RED. IT HAS SOMEHOW LODGED IN THE GUTTER SO THAT IT WON'T GO DOWN THE DRAIN, AND SIMPLY REMAINS STUCK THERE, STARING UP AT US WITH ITS JARRINGLY INANE EXPRESSION. A SMALL SPLASH OF CRIMSON STAINS THE FRONT OF THE BADGE. A SINGLE TINY SPATTER ACROSS ONE BLACK CARTOON EYE OF THE FACE ON THE BADGE. THAT'S BASICALLY THE WHOLE OPENING IMAGE, UNLESS YOU WANT TO STICK A CANDY WRAPPER THAT'S ABOUT TO FLOAT DOWN THE DRAIN, IN WHICH CASE WE HAVE A PACKET OF <u>MELTDOWNS</u>, WHICH ARE LIKE TREETS (ENGLISH) OR M&M's (AMERICAN) ONLY WITH LITTLE BRIGHTLY COLORED ATOMIC SYMBOLS ON THE WRAPPING. ONLY INCLUDE CANDY WRAPPING IF IT DOESN'T DETRACT FROM THE SIMPLICITY OF THE IMAGE WITH THE GUTTER, THE BLOOD AND THE BADGE, THOUGH, BECAUSE THIS IMAGE IS PRETTY IMPORTANT. IT GIVES US THE BLOOD SPATTERED SMILEY-BADGE, WHICH IS A PRETTY WORKABLE SYMBOL OF THE MYSTERY OF THE COMEDIAN'S MURDER WHICH RUNS THROUGH THE ENTIRE SERIES, AND IT ALSO GIVES US A FAINT SUBLIMINAL PREDICTION OF THE ENDING WITH IT'S IMAGE OF THE GUTTERS OF NEW YORK AWASH WITH BLOOD. ANYWAY, SEE WHAT YOU THINK AND LEAVE OUT THINGS LIKE THE SWEET WRAPPER IF YOU THINK THEY'RE EVEN SLIGHTLY DISTRACTING. WE'LL HAVE PLENTY OF TIME TO GET ALL OUR CUTE BRAND NAMES IN LATER ON IN THE SERIES. THE ACTUAL TEXT UPON THIS FIRST PAGE IS ALL TAKEN FROM RORSCHACH'S JOURNAL, WHICH WILL BE A MORE-OR-LESS CONTINUING FEATURE OF THE NARRATIVE THROUGHOUT THE SERIES. I MENTION THIS IN CASE YOU THINK IT MIGHT BE NICE TO VISUALLY DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN RORSCHACH'S JOURNAL AND ANY OTHER CAPTION BOXES THAT MIGHT OCCUR BY GIVING IT A SPECIFIC COLOR A SPECIFIC SHAPE OR LETTERING STYLE OR SOMETHING. I SUPPOSE IT'D BE NICE IF WE COULD ACTUALLY GET OVER SOME OF THE CHARACTER OF RORSCHACH HIMSELF BY THE WAY HIS JOURNAL IS WRITTEN, ALTHOUGH I SUPPOSE A SUITABLY WARPED-LOOKING STYLE OF HAND WRITING MIGHT BE OFF-PUTTINGLY DIFFICULT TO READ OR TIME CONSUMING AND DIFFICULT TO MAINTAIN. MAYBE YOU COULD SUGGEST A SORT OF SCRUFFINESS WITHOUT GETTING TOO ELABORATE, THOUGH. PERHAPS A MORE RAGGED EDGE OR A FAINT SPATTERING OF MESSY INK BLOTS IN THE BOXES HERE AND THERE AS IF THEY'D BEEN LETTERED BY A PEN WITH A SPLIT NIB OR SOMETHING. ANYWAY. THE OPTIONS ARE THERE, SO JUST DO WHAT YOU WANT. IN FACT, IF YOUR ANXIOUS TO SEE ANYTHING THAT EVEN SMACKS OF VISUAL FLUMMERY THEN PLEASE FEEL FREE TO MAKE RORSCHACH'S BOXES THE SAME AS EVERYONE ELSES AND RELY UPON THE TEXT IN THEM TO SET THEM APART FROM OTHER NARRATIVE WITHOUT IMPOSING ANY VISUAL GIMMICKS NEEDLESSLY. OKAY. THAT'S THE PRE-AMBLE OUT OF THE WAY. SO GIVE IT ALL YOU'VE GOT AND LETS SEE SOME GOOD DRAIN ART HERE.

CAP.: RORSCHACH'S JOURNAL. OCTOBER 12th, 1985:

CAP.: "dog carcass in alley this morning, tire tread on burst stomach. This city is afraid of me. I have seen its true face.

(PANEL) 2.

RIGHT.. NOW WE START TO PULL SLOWLY UPWARDS IN A DEAD STRAIGHT LINE FROM THE CLOSE UP OF THE DRAIN, SO THAT WE CAN SEE PROGRESSIVELY MORE OF THE SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE. WE CAN SEE THE STRIP OF GUTTER RUNNING DOWN THE LEFT HAND SIDE OF THE PANEL FROM TOP TO BOTTOM, AND WE CAN OBVIOUSLY SEE MUCH MORE OF IT THAN WE COULD IN THE FIRST PANEL. WE CAN SEE THE WHOLE OF THE DRAIN NOW, AND WE CAN STILL SEE THE BRIGHT YELLOW OF THE SMILEY BADGE THERE IN THE GUTTER, LODGED NEXT TO THE DRAIN, EVEN THOUGH IT IS OBVIOUSLY QUITE SMALL IN THIS PANEL. OVER TO THE RIGHT OF THE PICTURE, RUNNING FROM TOP TO BOTTOM AS WE LOOK DOWN UPON IT, WE CAN SEE A COUPLE OF FEET OF THE SIDEWALK ADJOINING THE GUTTER. OVER TO THE EXTREME RIGHT, WE CAN MAYBE SEE THE TOECAPS OF A PAIR OF GOLOSHES ENTERING THE PICTURE AND ALSO MAYBE THE NOZZLE OF A HOSE, PERHAPS BEING HELD IN A PAIR OF SKINNY MALE ADOLESCENT HANDS THAT ARE ALSO ENTERING INTO THE PICTURE ON THE RIGHT. ALL OF THESE BELONG TO A SEVENTEEN-YEAR-OLD SHOPBOY WHO HAS THE UNENVIABLE TASK OF HOSING THE BLOOD OFF THE SIDEWALK AFTER THE HOMICIDE THAT HAS HAPPENED IN THIS LOCATION ON THE NIGHT BEFORE OUR STORY OPENS. WE HARDLY NEED TO SEE HIM AT ALL, AND IF YOU JUST WANT TO HAVE THE SPRAY OF THE HOSE ENTERING THE PANEL FROM OFF-PIC ON THE RIGHT THEN THAT'S FINE BY ME. WE CAN SEE A FEW SLABS OF THE SIDEWALK HERE, AND WE CAN SEE THAT THEY HAVE A WIDE BAND OF BLOOD BEING DRIVEN ACROSS TOWARDS THE GUTTER BY THE JET OF THE HOSE. WE CAN'T SEE ALL OF THIS PATCH OF BLOOD HERE, BUT IT'S MAYBE ABOUT EIGHT OR NINE FEET WIDE AT IT'S WIDEST POINT AND WE CAN AT LEAST SEE THE TOP EDGE OF THE BLOOD HERE WHICH LIMITS THE VISUAL HORROR A LITTLE FROM THE APPARENT PROSPECT OF STREETS LITERALLY FILLED WITH BLOOD SEEMINGLY PROMISED BY THE VISUALS OF THE LAST PANEL. THE MOST IMPORTANT FEATURE OF THIS SHOT IS A PAIR OF SCUFFED AND BATTERED SHOES THAT ARE ENTERING THE PANEL UP AT THE TOP OF THE PICTURE, ABOUT TO WALK STRAIGHT THROUGH THE BAND OF BLOOD ON THE SIDEWALK WITH BLITHE UNCONCERN. AS WITH THE FIRST PICTURE ON THIS PAGE, IT DOESN'T MATTER IF THE IMAGE IS PUZZLING AT FIRST GLANCE BECAUSE THE NEXT IMAGE IN THE SEQUENCE RESOLVES ALL THE PROBLEMS AND PUTS THE IMAGE BEFORE INTO A BROADER PERSPECTIVE AS WE CONTINUE UP AND UP INTO THE HEIGHTS OF THE CITY.

CAP.: "The streets are extended gutters and the gutters are full of blood and when the drains finally scab over, all the vermin will drown.

(PANEL) 3.

OKAY.. WE CONTINUE TO PULL UP INTO THE AIR. HERE, WE ARE SOME NINE OR TEN FEET ABOVE THE SIDEWALK AND THE ADJOINING GUTTER AND STREET, LOOKING STRAIGHT DOWN. OVER TO THE LEFT OF THE PICTURE WE CAN STILL SEE THE DRAIN, AND MAYBE EVEN A LITTLE TINY SPLASH OF YELLOW THAT REPRESENTS OUR LAST GLIMPSE OF THE SMILEY BADGE BEFORE WE ARE TOO HIGH TO SEE IT ANY MORE. WE CAN SEE A RIBBON OF ROAD-SURFACE ADJOINING THE BLOOD-FILLED GUTTER OVER ON THE LEFT AS WE CONTINUE TO EXPAND OUR VIEW OF THE SURROUNDING SCENERY. OVER ON THE RIGHT WE NOW HAVE A FAIRLY GOOD SHOT LOOKING DOWN ONTO THE SIDEWALK AND WE CAN NOW CLEARLY SEE THE TWO PICTURES WHOSE EXISTENCE WE HINTED AT LAST PANEL. OVER ON THE RIGHT WITH HIS BACK TOWARDS THE RIGHT HAND SIDE OF THE PANEL AS WE LOOK DOWN UPON HIM WE CAN SEE THE ADOLESCENT SHOPBOY STANDING THERE WITH GOLOSHES AND SOMETHING THAT LOOKS LIKE A LONG BUTCHER'S OVERALL AND MAYBE A GOOFY PEAKED CAP ON HIS HEAD. HE IS HOLDING THE BUSINESS END OF THE HOSE, HOLDING IT IN ONE HAND WITH ITS JET DIRECTED DOWN TO A POINT A FEW FEET IN FRONT OF HIS TOE CAPS. THE BODY OF THE HOSE SNAKES BACK OFF THE EDGE OF THE PANEL BEHIND HIM TOWARDS SOME UNKNOWN SOURCE. WALKING INTO THE PICTURE FROM THE TOP OF THE PANEL AS HE WALKS DOWN THE STREET WE CAN SEE THE SMALL, SHABBY AND DISREPUTABLE FIGURE OF AN 'END OF THE WORLD IS NIGH' MAN. HE HAS SCRUFFY AND UNWASHED RED HAIR THAT OBVIOUSLY CUTS HIMSELF AND, DEPENDING ON WHAT DETAILS WE CAN SEE, A NUMBER OF UGLY FRECKLES ACROSS HIS BROAD AND PUG-UGLY FACE. HERE, HE IS LOOKING DOWN AT THE BLOOD FLOWING OVER THE TOES OF HIS ANCIENT AND SEMI-ROTTED SHOES WITH A LOOK OF INCOMPREHENSION AND BEWILDERMENT, GAPING STUPIDLY. DESPITE THE STEEP ANGLE OF THIS PICTURE WE CAN JUST ABOUT READ THE PLACARD THAT HE IS CARRYING OVER HIS SHOULDER, CRUDELY HAND-PAINTED IT READS SIMPLY 'THE END IS NIGH'. THE SHOPBOY IS STARRING HARD AT THE DERELICT FIGURE OF THIS SHABBY RELIGIOUS FANATIC AND IS SHOUTING AT HIM AS HE POINTS WITH HIS FREE HAND TOWARDS THE BLOOD THAT DOOM-SAYER IS STUPIDLY WALKING THROUGH. I DON'T WANT ANY PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE ATTACHED TO THIS SCENE. I JUST WANT IT TO BE AS IF WE'RE LOOKING DOWN UPON A TRIVIAL AND BIZARRE LITTLE SOCIAL EXCHANGE FROM UP ABOVE. A LITTLE BIT OF OBSERVATION THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THE STORY AT ALL. THE END OF THE WORLD IS NIGH MAN IS TREATED AS A PURELY COMIC FIGURE HERE, LIKE ONE OF THE FUNNY LITTLE WALK-ON CHARACTERS THAT YOU GET PASSING THROUGH THE BACKGROUNDS IN BILL FORSYTH FILMS LIKE GREGORY'S GIRL OR 'THAT SINKING FEELING'. HE ISN'T MADE TO SEEM IMPORTANT BEYOND THAT POINT.

CAP.: "The accumulated filth of all their sex and murder will foam up about their waists and all the whores and politicians will look up and shout "Save us"

CAP.: "... and I'll look down, and whisper "No."

(PANEL) 4.

RIGHT.. THOSE FIRST THREE PANELS WERE IN A SINGLE TIER ACROSS THE TOP OF THE PAGE, ALL EVENLY SIZED IN SO FAR AS THAT IS POSSIBLE. WE NOW BEGIN THE SECOND BANK OF PANELS, CONTINUING OUR SLOW PULL UP IN THE SAME PRECISE AND ORDERLY WAY. IN THIS PANEL WE ARE MAYBE TWENTY, TWENTY-FIVE FEET ABOVE THE SIDEWALK, AND OUR VIEW HAS EXPANDED IN DIRECT PROPORTION. DOWN TOWARDS THE RIGHT HAND SIDE OF THE PANEL THE RIBBON OF VISIBLE ROAD HAS WIDENED SO THAT WE CAN NOW SEE QUITE A BIT OF IT. WE CAN STILL JUST ABOUT SEE THE DRAIN IN THE GUTTER, BUT IT IS VERY SMALL, WITH ONLY THE BRIGHT RED BLOOD DRAWING IT TO OUR ATTENTION. PULLING INTO THE PICTURE FROM THE TOP OF THE PANEL IS A STRANGELY DESIGNED ARTICULATED TRUCK. EVEN THOUGH WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY SEEN THAT THE CLOTHING OF THE SHOPBOY AND THE PROPHET OF DOOM ARE SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT TO THE EVERYDAY STREET CLOTHING WE ARE FAMILIAR WITH WE HAVEN'T REALLY BEEN GIVEN MUCH OF A HINT AS TO JUST HOW DIFFERENT THIS VERSION OF 1985 REALLY IS. THE TRUCK, WITH IT'S UNUSUAL DESIGN, IS OUR FIRST REAL HINT OF HOW FAR THESE DIFFERENCES EXTEND. I'LL LEAVE THE DESIGN UP TO YOU, EXCEPT TO SAY THAT I LIKED THE DESIGN OF THE VEIDT INDUSTRIES TRUCK THAT YOU DID ON YOUR SAMPLE PAGE. HERE, EVEN DESPITE THE FACT THAT WE ARE LOOKING DOWN, WE CAN SEE THE LOGO ON THE SIDE OF THE TRUCK. WHEN I MENTIONED THIS TRUCK TO YOU OVER THE PHONE I SAID IT WOULD HAVE THE WORD "VEIDT" UPON THE SIDE. IT DOESN'T. THIS IS THE TRUCK THAT WE WILL SEE LATER DURING THIS SERIES MAKING CLANDESTINE DELIVERS TO THE INTER-SPATIAL ENERGIES RESEARCH PROJECT, AND VEIDT WOULDN'T HAVE HIS OWN COMPANY NAME ON THE SIDE OF IT AND RISK PROVIDING A POSSIBLE LINK BETWEEN HIS COMPANY AND WHAT EVENTUALLY HAPPENS AT THAT RESEARCH PROJECT. THE NAME OF THE SIDE OF THE TRUCK HERE, THEREFORE, IS PYRAMID DELIVERIES. BUT IF YOU PUT A PYRAMID LOGO ON IT, DON'T STICK AN EYE IN THE TOP OF THE PYRAMID BECAUSE WE DON'T WANT TO TIE IT TOO CLOSELY TO VEIDT AT THIS STAGE. ALL THIS IS JUST INCIDENTAL DETAIL OVER TO THE LEFT OF THE PANEL. OVER ON THE RIGHT, WE CAN SEE THE SIDEWALK. THE END OF THE WORLD MAN HAS CONTINUED WALKING DESPITE THE SHOP-BOYS ANGRY WARNING AND HAS CONTINUED DOWN THE SIDEWALK WALKING STRAIGHT THROUGH THE WIDE SWATHE OF STICKY CRIMSON BLOOD. IN A MACABRE YET ODDLY COMIC EFFECT HE LEAVES A TRAIL OF BLOODY RED FOOTPRINTS BEHIND HIMSELF AS HE EMERGES FROM THE BLOOD PATCH AND CONTINUES TO WALK DOWN THE SIDEWALK, IGNORING THE SHOPBOY WHO STANDS BEHIND HIM SHOUTING ANGRILY IN THE WAKE OF THE RELIGIOUS FANATIC, RAISING HIS MIDDLE FINGER TO THE DOOMDAYER'S TURNED BACK AS THE UGLY LITTLE MAN TRUDGES UNHEEDING WAY DOWN THE SIDEWALK CARRYING HIS BLEAK PLACARD WITH A LINE OF BLOODY FOOTPRINTS FOLLOWING HIM LIKE SOME CURIOUS FORM OF PEDAL STIGMATA OR SOMETHING. PROBABLY OVER ON THE FAR RIGHT OF THE PICTURE WE ARE LOOKING STRAIGHT DOWN THE STEEP WALLS OF THE VARIOUS BUILDINGS THAT BOUND THE SIDEWALK. THE BUILDING DIRESCTLY BENEATH US, OUTSIDE WHICH THE SHOPBOY IS HOSING DOWN BLOOD, IS A SMART APARTMENT BLOCK SOMEWHERE IN UPTOWN NEW YORK. DOWN AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PANEL, WE CAN MAYBE SEE A LITTLE OF THE FRONT OF ONE OF THE UNBIQUITOUS GUNGA DINERS THAT WE SHALL BE SEEING THROUGHT THE STRIP. THERE ARE NUMEROUS TRASH CANS STANDING OUTSIDE IT WITH THE AMOUNT OF RUBBISH THAT YOU'D EXPECT FROM A THRIVING FAST FOOD INDIAN RESTAURANT. AS WITH ALL THIS INSANE AMOUNT OF DETAIL, DON'T WORRY IF YOU CAN'T FIT IT ALL IN, SINCE THERE'LL BE PLENTY OF ROOM NEXT PANEL. THE MAIN IMAGE HERE IS THE END OF THE WORLD MAN WALKING GLOOMILY DOWN THE SIDEWALK AND LEAVING BRIGHT RED FOOTPRINTS BEHIND HIM.

CAP.: "They had a choice, all of them. They could have followed in the footsteps of good men, like my father, or President Truman.

CAP.: "Decent men, who believed in a day's work for a day's pay.

(PANEL) 5.

WE CONTINUE TO PULL UP, SO THAT WE ARE LOOKING DOWN THE SHEER WALL OF THE BUILDINGS BOUNDING THE SIDEWALK AT THE STREET FAR BELOW US. WE CAN NOW SEE THE GUNGA DINER'S FRONT AND MAYBE EVEN READ THE SIGN IF THAT'S POSSIBLE AT THIS PERSPECTIVE. PARKED OUTSIDE IN THE STREET WE CAN SEE A NUMBER OF STRANGELY DESIGNED POLICE CARS, MAYBE WITH A COP OR TWO STANDING ABOUT HERE AND THERE, SHOOTING THE BREEZE. THE PYRAMID TRUCK CONTINUES TO DRIVE DOWN THE STREET, ABOUT TO HEAD OFF THE BOTTOM OF THE PANEL MAYBE SPLASHING BLOOD UP FROM THE GUTTER OVER THE END OF THE WORLD MAN AS HE TRUDGES ALONG, ALTHOUGH IF THIS IS TOO TRICKY THEN LEAVE IT OUT. IT'S ONLY A LITTLE BIT OF LIGHT COMIC RELIEF. ADMITTEDLY, SOMEONE BEING SPLASHED WITH BLOOD MIGHT NOT SOUND VERY COMIC TO YOU, BUT COMPARED TO WHAT WE'VE GOT COMING UP LATER IT'S A REAL RIBTICKLER. WE'RE FORTY OR FIFTY FEET ABOVE THE STREET HERE, LOOKING DOWN UPON IT ALL.

CAP.: "Instead they followed the droppings of lechers and communists and didn't realize that the trail led over a precipise until it was too late.

CAP.: "Don't tell me they didn't have a choice.

(PANEL) 6.

LAST PANEL IN THE SECOND TIER NOW. WE ARE HUNDREDS OF FEET ABOVE THE STREET, LOOKING DOWN AT ALL THE LITTLE PEOPLE AND CARS BENEATH US. THE SPLASH OF RED ON THE SIDEWALK AND THE TRUCKS AND CARS ARE STILL VISIBLE, BUT EVERYTHING ELSE HAS BEEN REDUCED TO DOTS. WE DO, HOWEVER, GET TO SEE THE INTERESTING DIVERSITY OF THE CURIOUS DESIGNED TRAFFIC AS IT THREADS THROUGH THE STREET FAR BENEATH US. BY NOW THE READER SHOULD HAVE PICKED UP, IF ONLY SUBCONSCIOUSLY, THAT THIS ISN'T ANY 1985 THAT HE OR SHE HAS EVER HEARD ABOUT. ALL THIS IS OVER TO THE LEFT OF THE PICTURE. OVER TO THE RIGHT, RIGHT UP IN THE EXTREME CLOSE FOREGROUND, WE CAN SEE A LITTLE OF A WINDOW LEDGE THAT OVERLOOKS THE STREET. THERE ARE SOME TINY SPLINTERS OF GLASS STILL LYING ON THE LEDGE, AND THE ODD SPATTER OF PIGEON SHIT. ALSO RESTING UPON THE WINDOW LEDGE WE CAN SEE A PAIR OF MAN'S HANDS, RESTING LIGHTLY AGAINST THE LEDGE AS THE MAN STANDS OFF-PANEL ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WINDOW, LOOKING OUT AND STARING DOWN AT THE STREET BELOW. ALL WE CAN SEE OF HIM ARE HIS HANDS HERE. OR MAYBE ONLY ONE HAND, CAREFULLY PLACED AS TO AVOID THE JAGGED SHARDS OF GLASS THAT STILL STICK UP IN SMALL SPLINTERS AROUND THE FRAME OF THE WINDOW, WHICH, WE SHALL SEE, HAS BEEN SMASHED OUT FROM THE INSIDE.

CAP.: "Now the whole world stands on the brink, staring down into bloody hell, all those liberals and intellectuals and smooth-talkers ...

CAP.: ".. and all of a sudden, nobody can think of anything to say."

(PANEL) 7.

FINAL PANEL ON THIS PAGE, AND IT EXTENDS ACROSS THE ENTIRE BOTTOM TIER OF THE PAGE. WE HAVE PULLED UP A LAST FEW FEET SO THAT WE ARE NOW ABOVE THE MAN AS HE LEANS OUT THROUGH THE SHATTERED WINDOW OF THE TWENTY THIRD FLOOR APARTMENT AND GAZES DOWN GLOOMILY AT THE STREET BELOW. WE CAN ONLY REALLY SEE THE BACK OF HIS HEAD HERE WHICH IS BLACK HAIRED AND SLIGHTLY BALDING, BUT FOR THE SAKE OF FUTURE REFERENCE HE'S A COP, AND HIS NAME IS GIO. HE'S ABOUT FORTY-FIVE, CARRIES A LOT OF WEIGHT AND IS OBVIOUSLY OF ITALIAN DESCENT. HE WEARS A STRANGELY DESIGNED TRENCH COAT AND IS A BIT OF A SLOB. SHIRT TAIL HANGING OUT, STUFF LIKE THAT. HERE, WE CAN REALLY ONLY SEE THE BACK OF HIS HEAD AS HE GAZES DOWN AT THE STREET, BUT I MENTIONED HIS DISHEVELLED ASPECT IN CASE YOU WANT TO GIVE HIM DANDRUFF OR BLACK CRESCENTS OR DIRT UNDER HIS FINGERNAILS OR SOMETHIG. SINCE THIS IS A WIDE-ANGLE PANEL, WE GET A REALLY GOOD VIEW LOOKING DOWN AT THE CITY, SO THAT WE CAN SEE THE BUILDINGS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STREET FROM THE BUILDING THAT THE POLICEMAN IS IN. WE CAN SEE A COUPLE OF HOARDINGS, MAYBE ONE ADVERTISING SOME SORT OF ULTRA-MODERN SOUPED-UP G-PLAN FURNITURE "FROM VEIDT", OR MAYBE WE CAN SEE A HOARDING WITH A PICTURE OF A REALLY STRANGE AND FUTURISTIC-TYPE CAR ON IT WITH A LEGEND BENEATH IT PROCLAIMING IT TO BE THE 85 MODEL OF THE MOST COMMON AND ORDINARY TYPE OF AMERICAN CAR, WHATEVER THAT IS. I FIGURE THAT SEEING SUCH A STRANGE LOOKING VEHICLE BEING REFERRED TO AS AN '85 CHRYSLER OR WHATEVER WOULD BE NICELY DISORIENTING IN A VAGUE AND SUBLIMINAL WAY. OTHER THINGS WE CAN SEE HERE AND THERE AMONGST THE CITY BUILDINGS SHOULD INCLUDE A LARGE CLOCK, WHICH STANDS AT 11:54 A.M. IF A TALL CLOCK TOWER WITH A REGULAR CLOCK FACE ON IT LOOKS TOO MUCH LIKE THE SYMBOLIC CLOCK TOWERS OF MR. X. THEN MAYBE YOU COULD REPLACE IT WITH A DIGITAL DISPLAY GIVING THE SAME TIME. IF I CAN MANAGE IT, I'D LIKE TO CAREFULLY STAGE THIS STORY SO THAT WHENEVER WE SEE A CLOCK IT'S ALWAYS A LITTLE BEFORE TWELVE, EITHER IN THE MORNING OR AT NIGHT, BUT THERE ARE AN AWFUL LOT OF WAYS WE CAN GET THAT MOTIF OVER, SO WE DON'T HAVE TO USE STANDARD CLOCK FACES ALL THE TIME, IF A DIGITAL DISPLAY WORKS BETTER AND LOOKS MORE CREDIBLE IN A GIVEN CONTEXT. ANYWAY, HERE WE LOOK DOWN UPON GIO THE PLAIN CLOTHES POLICEMAN AS HE IN TURN LOOKS DOWN UPON WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS CRISP AND BRIGHT OCTOBER MORNING IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

GIO: Hmm.

GIO: That's quite a DROP.

PAGE 32.

(PANEL) 1.

SEVEN PANELS, ALL THE SAME SHOT, WIDE ONE AT THE VERY BOTTOM. WE HAVE THE CRANK FILE STANDING TO THE BOTTOM RIGHT FOREGROUND AND GODFREY'S DESK IN THE BACKGROUND. HERE, GODFREY STANDS GLANCING IRRITABLY AT A FILE SLIGHTLY TO THE LEFT OF THE F/G WHILE SEYMOUR ENTERS FROM THE RIGHT OF THE BACKGROUND BALANCING/PROPPING THE BURGER CARTON AGAINST HIS FLABBY CHEST AS HE AWKWARDLY TRIES TO GET HIS WIND-CHEATER OFF, REVEALING THE SMILEY SHIRT BENEATH. ON THE LEFT OF THE B/G WE SEE THE PEG THAT HE IS HEADING TOWARDS, GAPING ACROSS AT GODFREY AS HE DOES SO. IN THE F/G GODFREY SCOWLS IRRITABLY AT THE FILES.

SEYMOUR: I hadda go to the BURGERS 'N' BOR..

GODFREY: Don't SAY it. Don't say that WORD. I'll eat FOOD from the place if I MUST, but I WON'T have RUSSIAN spoken in this office.

GODFREY: Seymour, don't you have anything to DO?

SEYMOUR: Well, I was gonna EAT..

(PANEL) 2.

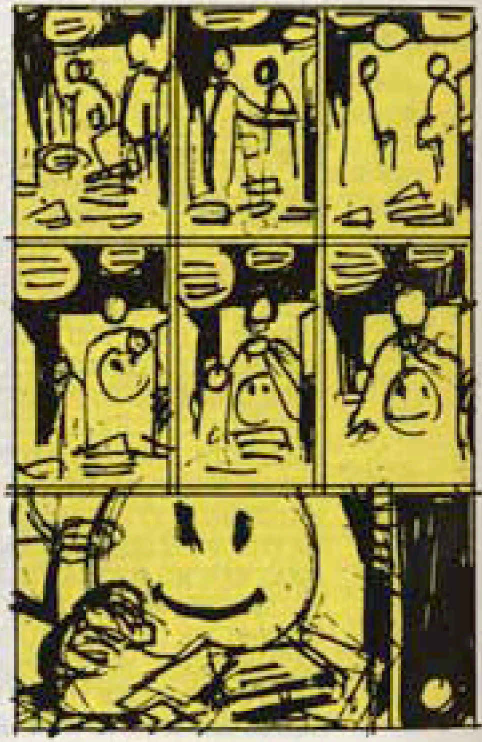
SAME SHOT. SEYMOR HAS OUT THE BOXES OF BURGERS DOWN ON GODFREY'S DESK (WHERE THERE IS A FOLDED SERVIETTE ALREADY) AND IS NOW HANGING HIS COAT ON THE COATPEG. GODFREY IS STARTING TO CROSS THE OFFICE DIAGONALLY TOWARDS HIS OWN DESK, GLARING AT SEYMOUR AS HE PASSES, CARRYING THE FILE. IN THE RIGHT F/G THE TOWER OF CRANK MAIL LOOMS.

GODFREY: OH no. You got two more PAGES to fill before YOU eat, thanks to this god damned ass-kissing ACCORD!

SEYMOUR: I thought your column..



(above, below and right) Script for issue twelve, page thirty-two.
(left) Gibbon's thumbnails for issue one, page one.
(right) Thumbnails for issue twelve, page thirty-two.
(opposite page) Assorted thumbnails.



(PANEL) 3.

PREPARING TO SIT DOWN IN THE RIGHT B/G, GODFREY WHISKS UP THE SERVIETTE FROM THE DESK,. STILL GLARING AT THE HAPLESS SEYMOUR. SEYMOUR, MORE TO THE LEFT AND SLIGHTLY NEARER TO US NOW, TAKES HIS BURGER FROM THE BOX ANYWAY, GAZING MORONICALLY AT GODFREY.

GODFREY: Yeah, well, you thought WRONG! Nobody's ALLOWED to say bad things about our good ol' buddies the RUSSIANS anymore, so bang goes a two page COLUMN!

GODFREY: Get some FILLER from somewhere.

SEYMOUR: Robert REDFORD says he'll be running for President in '88. We could run a piece on..

(PANEL) 4.

SEATED NOW, GODFREY CAREFULLY TUCKS HIS SERVIETTE INTO HIS COLLAR AS HE PREPARES TO EAT. HOLDING HIS BURGER UP IN ONE HAND BUT STILL LOOKING AT GODFREY, SEYMOUR PLODS TOWARDS US AND THE PILE OF CRANK MAIL IN THE FOREGROUND.

GODFREY: Seymour, we do NOT dignify ABSURDITIES with COVERAGE. This is still AMERICA, god damnit! Who wants a COWBOY ACTOR in the White house?

SEYMOUR: Hm. Well, then I guess it's somethin' from the CRANK FILE.

(PANEL) 5.

TURNING FROM GODFREY NOW, SEYMOUR STARES DISPIRITEDLY AT THE PILE OF CRANKMAIL TO THE RIGHT OF THE FOREGROUND. HE STILL HOLDS HIS BURGER UP IN ONE HAND. A GLOB OF KETCHUP IS STARTING TO DRIBBLE DOWN FROM ONE SIDE OF IT. IN THE BACKGROUND, GODFREY IS JUST STARTING TO RAISE HIS BURGER, GLARING ANGRILY ACROSS AT THE HOPELESS SEYMOUR IN THE FOREGROUND. SEYMOUR STARTS VERY SLIGHTLY TO RAISE HIS HAND TOWARDS THE CRANK PILE.

GODFREY: Yes, yes. Whatever's within your limited ABILITIES. Just please let me eat my lunch in PEACE.

SEYMOUR: Well, which piece should I RUN ? I..

(PANEL) 6.

SEYMOUR HALF TURNS TO LOOK AT GODFREY. HIS HAND IS PAUSED HALFWAY TOWARDS THE CRANK PILE AND WE CANNOT TELL WHICH ONE HE'S REACHING FOR. RORSCHACH'S JOURNAL IS SOMEWHERE PROMINENT IN THE PILE, AS IT HAS BEEN ALL ALONG. THE GLOB OF TOMATO KETCHUP IS JUST STARTING TO FALL HERE. IN THE BACKGROUND, GODFREY HAS HIS BURGER HELD DAINTILY IN BOTH HANDS, PINKIES EXTENDED, RAISED TO HIS MOUTH FOR A BITE. HE GLARES FURIOUSLY OVER THE TOP OF IT AT SEYMOUR.

GODFREY: SEYMOUR, for God's SAKE! I'm asking you to take RESPONSIBILITY for once in your miserable life, while I eat LUNCH! Is that too MUCH?

GODFREY: Go ON. Just run whichever you WANT...

(PANEL) 7.

WIDE PANEL, CLOSING ON A DETAIL OF LAST PANEL. ALL WE SEE NOW IS SEYMOURS MOTIONLESS HAND ON THE LEFT, POISED IN MID MOVEMENT, HEADING TOWARDS THE CRANK FILE WITH FINGERS OPEN TO TAKE SOMETHING, BUT WE ARE UNABLE TO TELL WHAT. FILLING THE BACKGROUND IS THE GIANT SMILEY FACE ON HIS T-SHIRT. THE KETCHUP SPLASHES ACROSS THE RIGHT EYE, OVER ON THE LEFT. THE HAND IS FROZEN.

GODFREY (OFF) : I leave it entirely in your hands.

QUOTE (IN BOX) : "And it will be a stronger world
a stronger loving world
to die in."

-JOHN CALE, "Santies", from
MUSIC FOR A NEW SOCIETY

